

VZCZCXRO7056  
PP RUEHROV  
DE RUEHJM #0201/01 0281541  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 281541Z JAN 09  
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3967  
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 JERUSALEM 000201

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA. NSC FOR SHAPIRO/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/28/2024  
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: WEST BANKERS RELEASE PETITION CALLING FOR  
RECONCILIATION, UNITY GOVERNMENT

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Prominent Palestinians from a range of political factions in the West Bank issued a petition January 26 calling for national reconciliation and a national unity government. Their stated goal is to generate pressure on President Abbas and Hamas leaders to return to discussions and agree to an internationally acceptable PA cabinet. Fatah signatory Qadura Faris told ConGen that a unity government is Fatah's best hope, given the challenge from Hamas, and that negotiations must yield results for Palestinians if they are to sustain momentum. ConGen translation of the petition follows at para 5. End Summary.

PALESTINIAN NOTABLES RELEASE PETITION  
CALLING FOR RECONCILIATION, UNITY GOVERNMENT  
-----

¶2. (U) On January 26, prominent Palestinian leaders, activists, and NGOs publicly released a signed petition calling for the formation of a new PA government based on national unity, and urging Palestinians to pressure the leaders of the PA and Hamas through public activities, rallies, and demonstrations. Several political independents, including Hanan Ashrawi, Mustafa Barghouti, and Munib al-Masri, signed the petition. Neither Fatah nor Hamas signed the petition officially, but members of both factions signed, including Qadura Faris and Husam Khader from Fatah, and Hamas's Naser al-Din al-Shaer, Ayman Daraghme, Ali Sartawi, and Ahmad Khalidi.

¶3. (U) The petition calls for an "immediate and unconditional" launch of dialogue, including all Palestinian factions and based on previous reconciliation efforts, aimed at national reconciliation and the formation of a national unity government. The petition asserts that unity must be based on Palestinian national rights, international law, and all "legitimate" means of resistance. According to the petition, the new government should prepare for national elections, reform the security services, and work toward statehood and an end to settlements. The petition also calls for Gaza crossings to be opened and for connectivity between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. It encourages reform of the PLO.

¶4. (U) The petition calls for a national unity government formed without regard for the "unfair" conditions of the Quartet. It says that negotiations on the basis of the Annapolis Conference and the Road Map should be halted in favor of a "new approach." It also says that a national unity government should cease "security coordination" (presumably between PA security forces and Israeli authorities in the West Bank).

TURNING THE PA "UPSIDE DOWN"  
-----

15. (C) Qadura Faris, a "grassroots" activist close to imprisoned Fatah official Marwan Barghouti, told PolSpec January 26 that he believes reconciliation and a national unity government are the only way to stem the flow of popular support from Fatah to Hamas. Fatah cannot stand up to Hamas on its own at this point, and its leaders lack a strategic vision for internal Palestinian politics and for permanent status negotiations, he said. Maintaining popular support for a negotiated solution requires delivering positive results to the Palestinian people, and the only way to do this is to "turn (the PA) upside down." He added that he hopes the new U.S. administration will see things the same way.

16. (C) Head of Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) Mahdi Abdul Hadi told PolOff on January 28 that he signed the petition, because he believes the end of Israeli operations in Gaza presents a limited window to pressure PA and Hamas leaders to re-engage with each other. This is the last chance, he said, and any responsible Palestinian would have signed it. The alternative, in his view, would mean the end of Palestinian aspirations for statehood. He said the worst thing Abu Mazen could do at this point is to appear to be catering to the Israelis, as that would erode his little remaining credibility.

TEXT OF THE PETITION

17. (U) Text of the petition follows:

JERUSALEM 00000201 002 OF 004

Appeal for Unity

January 26, 2009

The Palestinian people face these days dangerous conditions. There is deterioration in the conditions following the recent barbaric aggression on Gaza Strip and its local, Arab, regional and international ramifications, along with the positions and measures that endanger the safety and unity of the Palestinian territories and other measures that jeopardize the representation and independence of the Palestinian people's decision, and the work underway to prepare the grounds for passing schemes that Israel has aimed to impose on our people through increasing colonialism schemes, denying the Palestinian people their rights, and through steps aimed to realize the Zionist dream. In face of this dangerous picture, there is a need to adopt a clear position based on the pillars of the higher national interests which are supposed to rise high above all other individual, tribal, partisan interests. The Palestinian higher national interests must remain an area of national consensus which can constitute a basis for agreement on common national denominators that allow for achieving national unity and that can enable the Palestinian people to achieve their national goals.

The undersigned call on the Palestinian people to support the appeal for unity in all its components and principles and to struggle to translate it into practical steps:  
The principles and components of the appeal for unity are as follows:

First: the general principles of the appeal for unity

1- The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and the dispersion of the Palestinian people and the attempts to conceal their identity and to deny their national rights that include right of return and exercise the right of self determination, including the right of establishing their independent Palestinian state, with al-Quds as its capital, on all Palestinian territories which were occupied in 1967, is the basis of the conflict; therefore, the struggle towards

ending the occupation and recognizing the Palestinian rights is the compass that must lead the path and work of the national forces.

2- The West Bank, including Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip is one geographic entity that is under the Israeli occupation and the occupation does not end unless it ends on all parts of this entity.

3- The aggression on the Palestinian people in Gaza Strip is an aggression on the entire Palestinian people and it aims to break the will of the Palestinian people and force them to coexist with the occupation and splits and surrender in front of the schemes that aim to eliminate the Palestinian national cause. Moreover, this aggression is part of the aggression that was launched by the Israeli occupation troops on the West Bank in 2002 and this requires a Palestinian policy that can meet the requirements to frustrate the goals of this aggression.

4- The political and geographic split is catastrophic to the Palestinian cause; therefore, there is a need to grant priority towards ending the split through dialogue which must be lead quickly to a national consensus based on the pillars of the higher national interests that must rise above all partisan interests.

5- The basic pillar of national action must include maintaining the democratic principles of the political system, including peaceful transfer of authority and pluralism in all its form and preserving and respecting individual rights and freedoms and human rights, and securing the rule of law, in addition to the adoption of regular and periodic elections. The pillars of the higher national interests that unite Palestinians wherever they are forces everyone to respect the unity of the cause and people and to preserve the freedom of belief and freedom of expression and the right to protest and demonstrate; this also entails the complete and immediate halt of all forms of political oppression and arrest and the need to release all political detainees and ending torture and acts of killing and ending incitement campaigns and refraining from issuing decisions or decrees that can lead to further split and division.

Second: components of the appeal for unity

1- The appeal for unity is based on the importance of having

JERUSALEM 00000201 003 OF 004

a Palestinian role that can exert pressure to end the split and achieve unity. The unity for appeal is based on the Cairo Declaration and the National Reconciliation Document; it complements all other Palestinian, Arab and international efforts and initiatives, including the Egyptian paper, and the Yemenite Initiative that enjoyed consensus at the Arab Summit in Damascus.

2- Immediate and unconditional start of comprehensive national dialogue with the participation of all national factions, parties and figures and serious action to achieve national reconciliation that includes the basic issues in a manner that reflects the interests and aspirations of the Palestinian people within the framework of their national constants through democratic means and this must come in one package with all clauses to be implemented in parallel within an agreed upon timetable.

3- The formation of an agreed upon Palestinian national government that abides by a program that reflects the Palestinian national rights and that adheres to international law and the UN resolutions away from the unfair conditions of the Quartet in dealing with this government, and this government has to be strong and capable of unifying the two sectors of the homeland in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and that can prepare for organizing legislative and presidential elections and that can stop security coordination and reform

the security services so that they become professional services that serve the homeland and the citizen and enforce the rule of the law away from partisan interests.

4- To struggle towards ending the siege and opening all crossings and establishing a permanent, free and safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza Strip and take all Palestinian necessary measures to facilitate relief and reconstruction of Gaza Strip as soon as possible, and move away from all matters that can further deepen the split between the West Bank and Gaza Strip or make it a total separation.

5- To stress on the right of the Palestinian people in resisting the occupation using all legitimate means and to consider this as a legitimate right and duty to be exercised within the context of national reconciliation and in accordance with the international law and in a manner that serves the national cause and the goal of independence.

6- To stop bilateral negotiations that have moved on the basis of Annapolis track and the Road map and to find a new approach to the negotiations that can guarantee the halt of settlement activities and that can end the aggression and siege; the new approach needs to be based on the international law and the UN resolutions with aim to implement the UN resolutions and not hold negotiations over them and to achieve our legitimate national rights.

7- The unity of the Palestinian representation and the independence of their decision must be protected by all the Palestinians in honor and loyalty to the struggle and sacrifices of our people; this also necessitates work to reform, reactivate and reformulate the PLO so that it includes, encompasses, and reflects the interests and aspirations of all sectors of the Palestinian people, away from factional quotas, and on the basis of national partnership and the national program. This also entails holding Palestinian National Council elections, along with elections at the popular and trade union levels on the basis of full proportional representation in accordance with the National Reconciliation Document, wherever possible, inside the homeland and all over the Palestinian Diaspora, in order to form a new National Council that reflect the aspirations of all sectors, parties and wings of the Palestinian people.

8- To set the Palestinian National Authority within its natural status as an interim arrangement towards establishing the independent Palestinian state with full sovereignty and with al-Quds as its capital. The PNA needs to be subject to the national program and to its reference which is the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people which leads the struggle towards return and towards exercising the right of self-determination, freedom, sovereignty and independence.

9- The Palestinian leadership needs to delegate a Palestinian commission consisting of legal experts to follow up the issue of filing court cases, especially in the countries where their legal systems allow it and to exert pressure and lobbying efforts to see the UN conduct an international investigation and hold the leaders and Generals of Israel

JERUSALEM 00000201 004 OF 004

accountable for what they committed in terms of war crimes and render compensation to the Palestinian people.

END TEXT

NOTE: Among the signatories are: Naser al-Qidwa Shaykh Taysir al-Tamimi, Bassam al-Salhi, Hanan Ashrawi, Samir Huleileh, Samir Abdullah Abu Eisheh, Abdul Rahim Mallouh, Ghassan al-Khatib, Qadura Faris, Qays Abdul Karim, Munib Rashid Al-Masri, Nasser al-Din al-Shaer, Nabil Qassis, Sakher Bsayso, Azmi Shueibi, Husam Khader, and more than 40 other activists and NGOs.

